

Hiring Department: Block Museum

Job Title: Curatorial Research Fellow

Job Summary:

The Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art plays an active role at Northwestern University, a leading research university situated in the Greater Chicago area. The museum presents a rigorous and diverse program that reaches across time, place, culture, and media; acting as a convener for interdisciplinary conversations; being an innovative “third space” for teaching and learning; and collaborating with and supporting faculty and students.

The Block seeks a curatorial research fellow for an exhibition focusing on the Indigenous art history of Chicago, which has received a two-year research and development grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art as part of their Art Design Chicago 2024 initiative.

The Terra Foundation Curatorial Research Fellow will work in collaboration with a team of three curators.

This project takes a deliberate approach to recounting an underappreciated art history of Chicago from Native American perspectives. Chicago sits on the homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa; as well as the Menominee, Miami, and Ho-Chunk nations. The site has long been a cultural and economic hub for Indigenous peoples and is currently home to a diverse Native community. With this acknowledgement as a critical reference and call to action, The Block’s project will explore the confluences that have shaped and continue to shape Indigenous creative practices in Chicago, putting the past in conversation with the past. We will develop *Indigenous Chicago* through a collaborative, decolonizing process that upholds Indigenous curatorial methodologies of inclusivity, reciprocity, and research shaped by community priorities.

This is the first two-year term of what is anticipated to be a four-year project. Renewal for a second term is dependent on grant funding. During the first term the focus will be on research and development. The ideal candidate will have a background in Native American Studies and experience with undertaking multidisciplinary research. Residency in the Chicagoland area is preferred and will be required once on-site work and research resumes as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Please note: This is a part-time 20 hour per week position.

The Terra Foundation Curatorial Research Fellow position will support the in-depth research and the collaborative work that is required for the project’s development.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Help to plan, coordinate, and implement small group convenings of the project advisors
- 45. Contribute to debriefing and collating information following convenings.

- Coordinate with Northwestern campus programs and partners. Support engagement with local and regional Native American advisors.
- Undertake directed research in Chicago area collections and archives 45. Research objects for the exhibition checklist. Manage object checklist. Contribute to exhibition ideation
- Help plan curatorial research travel.

Miscellaneous

- Performs other duties as assigned.

Minimum Qualifications:

- A Bachelor's Degree in art history, history, anthropology, performance studies, visual studies, or a related field and specialization in Native American studies, or equivalent work experience.
- Ability to conduct art historical research.
- Competency in writing about art.
- Ability to write clearly and concisely.
- Strong organization skills and attention to detail.
- Ability to follow directions and to work independently and collaboratively.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook).
- Demonstrated excellent writing and verbal communication skills.

Minimum Competencies: (Skills, knowledge, and abilities.)

- Adaptability – Works effectively in an environment in which the parameters may change daily; adjusts behavior to meet the needs of different people and situations.
- Coaching/Mentoring – Trains people for current assignment and develops them for promotion; uses feedback and personal example to encourage higher performance.
- Collaboration – Facilitates open and effective communication, cooperation and teamwork within and outside of one's own team; respects the needs and contributions of others.
- Communication – Communicates effectively one-to-one, in small groups and in public speaking contexts; writes precise, well-organized emails, letters and proposals while using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
- Customer Focus – Regularly monitors customer satisfaction; provides suggestions to improve quality and value to the customer.
- Development of Self/Others – Stays current on technical/professional information; identifies methods for improving work procedures or systems; solicits feedback from customers, peers and superiors.
- Diversity – Creates an environment of understanding and acceptance; solicits input from a wide variety of people and functions; challenges organizational policies and practices that may be exclusionary.
- Efficiency/Dependability – Effectively performs duties and responsibilities; displays attention to detail; supports organizational policies; anticipates demands/pressures of assignments and adjusts accordingly.

- Ethics and Integrity – Follows through on commitments; incorporates honesty, respect and fairness in daily actions; demands trustworthiness from others; demonstrates courage and objectivity.
- Initiative – Exhibits energy and desire to achieve; sets ambitious goals and acts decisively; takes action that no one has requested to improve or enhance job results and avoid problems.
- Innovation/Creativity – Explores alternatives to existing products and services; identifies opportunities to improve procedures and practices; shows imagination.
- Management Change – Seeks projects that initiate changes in the organization; informs team members of upcoming changes; creates clear time frames and involves those who will be affected by changes in the planning and implementation process.
- Multi-Tasking – Demonstrates ability to work on multiple projects simultaneously.
- Organization – Plans, organizes, and schedules in an efficient, productive manner; anticipates contingencies and pays attention to detail; targets projects or initiatives that require special attention and focuses on key tasks when faced with limited time and/or resources.
- Problem Solving – Formulates realistic plans and contingencies and establishes appropriate measurements of anticipated results.

Preferred Qualifications:

- A Master's Degree in art history, history, anthropology, performance studies, visual studies, or a related field and specialization in Native American studies or equivalent combination of education and work experience;
- Previous work experience in a museum, cultural center, or related institution particularly as a curatorial intern or curatorial assistant.

Northwestern University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer of all protected classes, including veterans and individuals with disabilities. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply. Hiring is contingent upon eligibility to work in the United States. [APPLY HERE](#)